

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system for accepting and storing items for subsequent pickup by a commercial carrier includes a storage area which is defined by an outer housing, and a customer interface area that includes a weighing unit and a unit, such as a magnetic card reader, for accepting payment from a customer. The system may also include a control system that accepts address information from the customer through a key pad, and then instructs a printer to print an address label for the item. The system includes safeguards which prevent unauthorized access to the storage area, and will not provide a receipt to the customer until internal sensors verify deposit of the item. A manifest printer may also be provided for the benefit of the commercial carriers who service the system, to print out a summary of the transactions that pertain to each carrier. Alternatively, no storage area is provided. Instead, the item is given to a human attendant, such as a check out clerk of a grocery or hardware store and the like, with the appropriate mailing label for validation of receipt of the item by the attendant.